Frequently Asked Questions

"Creating Dementia Capable, Sustainable Service Systems For Persons With Dementia And Their Family Caregivers"
FY 2011 Funding Opportunity
U.S. Administration on Aging
HHS-2011-AoA-DS-1114

Last update: July 1, 2011

Question: Are potential applicants required to submit a Letter of Intent to apply?

Answer: Though not required, letters of intent are desirable because they enable AoA to design the review process. The deadline date for submission of a letter of intent is June 27, 2011. Letters of intent should be sent via email to:

> Jane Tilly, DrPH
> Center for Planning, Policy and Evaluation
> Email: jane.tilly@aoa.hhs.gov

Question: Who may apply?

Answer: This competition is limited to State Units on Aging.

Question: Are Tribal Organizations eligible to apply?

Answer: No. However, they may participate in projects as a partner. States are encouraged to include tribal organizations in their applications.

Question: Is funding for this project provided through the Affordable Care Act (ACA)?

Answer: No, funding for this project comes from Public Health Service Act.

Question: Funding Opportunities HHS-2011-AoA-AA-1113 (Part A) and HHS-2011-AoA-DS-1114 (Part B) were included in the same Program Announcement. Are states required to apply for both opportunities? Are separate applications for Part A and Part B required?

Answer: AoA is seeking to work with applicants to develop and operate integrated long-term service and support systems that are dementia capable; therefore, **applicants are encouraged to apply for both Parts A and B of this Program Announcement.** This Program Announcement contains a detailed description of Part A and Part B. Applicants can review one Program Announcement for both priorities and instructions, however **to apply for both parts an applicant must submit separate applications under the separate Program Announcement titles.** *It is anticipated that these will be highly competitive funding opportunities.*

Question: The Announcement says that these cooperative agreements will range **"**from $370,000 to $1 million total for the award period**."** Are these figures the ceiling a state could request?

> **Answer:** States may request more than the amounts specified in the program announcement for this cooperative agreement and some awards may exceed these estimates.

Question: What is the difference between a grant and a "cooperative agreement"?

> **Answer:** In the United States federal grants are financial assistance issued by the U.S. Government. A cooperative agreement is a variation of a grant, which is awarded when a grant provider anticipates having substantial involvement with the grantee during the performance of a funded project. These grants will be issued as cooperative agreements because they are significant and multifaceted endeavors in which AoA anticipates having substantial involvement with the recipients during performance of funded activities. To ensure program success, the cooperative agreement structure allows AoA to provide a higher level of technical assistance, oversight and support than a grant relationship offers.

Question: What are direct services?

> **Answer:** Those services which are listed as "direct services" in the program's statute are: "…home health care, personal care, [adult] day care, companion services, short-term care in health facilities, and other respite care to individuals with Alzheimer's disease or related disorders that are living in single family homes or congregate settings." For this program announcement, respite is defined as an interval of rest or relief **OR** the result of a direct service intervention that generates rest or relief for the person with dementia and/or their family caregiver. For example, if people with dementia and/or their family caregivers receive counseling or training through an intervention, the intervention will be considered to have generated respite for the participants. This may be considered part of the direct service requirement. Under this cooperative agreement, at least **50% of the federal funds** must be spent on direct services.

Question: Can the salary of a direct service provider count towards a direct service?

> **Answer:** Yes, if a paid position is an essential component of the direct service provision for this project, the salary for that position may count towards direct service.

Question: What are administrative expenses?

> **Answer:** Administrative expenses include direct and indirect costs related to (1) routine grant administration and monitoring (for example, receipt and disbursal of program funds, preparation of routine programmatic and financial reports, and compliance with grant conditions and audit reports) and (2) contract development, solicitation review, award, monitoring, and reporting.

Administrative expenses do not include costs associated with substantive programmatic work (e.g. the costs associated with salaries, fringe and travel for a project director and other programmatic staff involved in the implementation of the program). Other examples of expenses that are not considered to be an administrative expense are: the costs of direct services (e.g., training, counseling and respite); project planning and implementation (e.g., translating evidence-based research protocols); and evaluation and information dissemination.

Under this cooperative agreement, no more than **10% of the federal funds** can be spent on administrative expenses. However, there are no restrictions on the use of non-federal funds for administrative purposes, including the matching funds that are used for this cooperative agreement.

Question: Is there a match requirement?

> **Answer:** Yes. Section 398 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 398 et seq.), requires that grantees provide a 25% match of total costs during the first year of a project, 35% during the second year, and 45% during the third and subsequent years of the cooperative agreement period. **Match can be made cash or in-kind**. Match does not need to come from the state grantee; it can be contributed by any non-federal sources and it can come from multiple partners. **Waivers to these match requirements are not allowed.**

Question: Is an in-kind match allowable as part of the match required under this funding opportunity?

> **Answer:** Yes. As described in the Program Announcement, "non-federal non-cash" or "in-kind" contributions are allowable as part of an applicant's match. Note that the match can be provided by any of the partners in this project including the state, AAAs, local services providers, a foundation, or any other partner in this project.

Question: Can existing state-funded programs be used as match?

> **Answer**: Yes, a state funded program may be used as non-federal cash, non-federal share. Match may be satisfied by non-federal, non-cash, or in-kind contributions provided by any partners in this project including the state, area agencies on aging, local service providers, and/or foundations. . Please note that States cannot use state resources that were funded by other Federal agencies/programs.

Question: Are there restrictions on what an applicant can use for the non-financial contribution (match) required of grantees?

> **Answer:** Non-financial recipient contributions may include the value of goods and/or services contributed by the grantee and any and all third parties involved in the project, including sub-grantees, contractors and consultants. Examples of non-financial recipient

contributions include: salary/fringe benefits of staff devoting time to the grant and not otherwise included in the budget or derived from federal funds, applicable indirect costs, volunteer time, and use of facilities to hold meetings or conduct project activities. In-kind contributions from a third party may also be used as non-financial contributions.

Question: What value should be assigned to volunteer services used for in-kind matching?

Answer: Volunteer hours included as in-kind matching should be valued at what you would have to pay another individual to provide the service in your area. If you do not have a current measure of the cost of an individual providing a particular service, you may consider investigating other direct service providers in your area.

Question: Can we subcontract some or all grant activities?

Answer: Grantees, not the Federal Government, must decide whether it is in their best interest to subcontract some of the grant activities. That said, however, it is very important that the grantee realize that the administrative responsibility and oversight of all grant activities remains with the grantee. Thus, we recommend that when subcontracting, the grantee should retain sufficient funding to adequately fulfill its administrative and oversight responsibilities. In addition, it is important for a state to maintain sufficient internal staff capacity to learn from the pilot implementation stages and plan for broader systems application.

Question: At the time of the application, do potential sub-contractors or sub-grantees need to be registered in the Central Contractor Registration (CCR)?

Answer: No. Please see this website for more details about CCR: http://www.aoa.gov/aoaroot/Grants/CCR_DUNS_requirements.aspx

Question: The Review Criteria for Approach (page 54) require the proposal to show optimal "use of potential partnerships with other organizations and/or consumer groups". Who are the required partners?

Answer: There are no prescribed partners for the proposal. However, AoA is looking for integrated systems that are able to show how they are working collaboratively with multiple organizations. As an example, integrated systems would include significant partnership with groups such as: disabilities entities, health care systems, hospitals, physician practices, quality improvement organizations, Veterans Administration Medical Centers, Federally Qualified Health Centers, State and local health departments, State and Local Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Agencies, Medicaid Agencies and/or Lifespan Respite coalitions.

Question: Can for-profit partners receive grant funds through this funding announcement?

Answer: States may choose to subcontract with organizations for project-related services that include, but are not limited to, for-profit entities. However, each state is subject to its

own procurement policies and procedures and is ultimately responsible for the oversight of the project.

Question: Should the budget include funds for traveling to grantee meetings?

> **Answer:** Yes. AoA projects at least 3 national meetings with grantees during the grant period. Applicants should plan and budget to send 3 representatives to each of these national meetings.

Question: Is it a requirement that persons served under this project have a medical diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease or related dementias?

> **Answer:** No. However, a diagnosis is helpful for learning about treatment options and for future planning, especially in the early stages of the disease. Many individuals that have Alzheimer's disease and related dementias are undiagnosed.

Question: Can these grant funds be used for services for individuals that have been diagnosed with Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI), but have not been told that they have Alzheimer's disease or dementia?

> **Answer:** Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI) is defined as a slight, detectable memory disorder that may be noticed by others but that may not be serious enough to interfere with everyday life. Although an MCI diagnosis increases one's chance of developing dementia, not all individuals diagnosed with MCI progress to dementia.[1]
>
> In order to be eligible for services under this program announcement, an individual must meet both of the following criteria:
> - There must be evidence of progressive cognitive and functional decline due to a degenerative brain disease.
> - The person must require assistance with one of the following direct services: adult day care, companion services, home health care, personal care, respite or short-term care in a health facility.
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> Given this definition and criteria, an individual diagnosed with MCI – in the absence of a diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease and related disorders – may be eligible to receive services. However, the applicant organization should describe specifically how MCI-diagnosed persons would be identified and enrolled.

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[1] Alzheimer's Association. (2009). Accessed May 26, 2009 from http://www.alz.org/alzheimers_disease_mild_cognitive_impairment.asp

Question: Can these grant funds be used for services to persons under the age of 60?

    Answer: Yes. There are no age restrictions under the authorizing legislation for this program (Sec. 398 of the Public Health Service Act (P.L. 78-410; 42 U.S.C. 280c-3)

Question: Page 50 of the program announcement asks applicants to describe how they will serve special populations; limited English-speaking populations are given as an example. What are some other examples of special populations?

    Answer: Those living in rural/frontier areas, racially and/ethnically diverse populations, persons with disabilities, family caregivers, and/or other populations who may experience barriers to accessing community-based services and supports.

Question: Part B, Objective #1 mentions serving 50% or greater of the state's population by the end of year 2 of the project. Can you say more about what this means?

    Answer: The Program Announcement says: "These components must be available to at least half the population in the state by the end of the second grant year." The operative word is "available." States are reminded that the Program Announcement also clearly states: "To ensure sustainability of the comprehensive array of high quality services, including evidence-based programs, grantees must leverage existing Federal and State level initiatives."

    States should carefully review the program announcement and, based on its content and the grantee's knowledge of their state system, describe how they will meet this requirement. Applicants are reminded that applications will be scored based on the review criteria on pages 53-55.

Question: What population or who should the system serve?
    Answer: States should clearly define and describe in their application the population that the system will serve. The Program Announcement states: " **Special Target Populations and Organizations**.   This section should describe how the applicant plans to involve community-based organizations in a meaningful way in the planning and implementation of the integrated systems project. This section should also describe how the proposed intervention will target underserved populations, including limited-English speaking populations."

Question: What is meant by "rapid planning cycle", referenced on page 42 of the program announcement?

    Answer: A "rapid planning cycle" refers to a Planning Phase of no more than 6 months from the notification date of the grant award. A Planning Phase exceeding 6 months will be given exceptional scrutiny and will be open to negotiation. During this planning phase, AoA will be actively involved and grantees will be able to access no more than 15% of total grant funding in developing their implementation plan.

Question: Are grantees required to participate in technical assistance activities?

Answer: Yes. Because these are cooperative agreements, we believe that the primary means of sharing information and facilitating discussions of barriers, ways to resolve barriers, and share successes among grantees is through a technical assistance provider. Therefore, in order to attain the stated programmatic goals, all grantees must participate in technical assistance efforts.

Question: How should the project narrative be structured?

Answer: The components of the project narrative include:

Summary/Abstract

Dementia Capability Assessment

Dementia Capability Objectives

Special Target Populations and Organizations

Outcomes

Dementia Capability Systems Project Management

Evaluation

Dissemination

Organizational Capability Statement

Each of these project components should be used as *headings* throughout the narrative.

Question: What is the page limit for the project narrative?

Answer: 15 pages. The Project Work Plan, Letters of Commitment, and Vitae of Key Personnel are not counted as part of the Project Narrative for purposes of the 15-page limit. To prevent confusion, please ensure that each section is clearly labeled using the headings listed above.

Question: Do references count toward the 15 page limit of the proposal narrative?

Answer: If the proposal references are not included as a part of the narrative but rather are "referenced" and included as an attachment or appendix, they will not count toward the 15 page limit. To prevent confusion and possible disqualification of your proposal, please ensure that each section is clearly labeled using the headings listed above.

Question: If a state is applying for both parts A and B, can content from the part A application be referenced in the application for B and vice versa?

Answer: Each application will be scored based on the review criteria for that application alone. Therefore, *each application must stand on its own against the criteria*. However, a state may chose to include some of the same information/content in each application.

Question: Can we include maps as appendices to our application?

Answer: Yes. It may be helpful for reviewers to see, visually, how access to services and supports would be enhanced throughout the state over the project period.

Question: If my state encounters an obstacle to submitting the application by the deadline, will AoA accept the application after the deadline passes?

Answer: No, the application must be submitted by the deadline.

Grants.gov (http://*www.grants.gov*) will automatically send applicants a tracking number and date of receipt verification electronically once the application has been successfully received and validated in http://*www.grants.gov*. After AoA retrieves your application form from http://*www.grants.gov*, a return receipt will be emailed to the applicant contact. This will be in addition to the validation number provided by http://*www.grants.gov.*

Unsuccessful submissions will require authenticated verification from *http://www.grants.gov* indicating system problems existed at the time of your submission. For example, you will be required to provide an *http://www.grants.gov* submission error notification and/or tracking number in order to substantiate missing the cut off date.

Question: Who will review the grant applications?

Answer: Applications that pass the initial application screening will be reviewed by an independent panel consisting of at least three individuals. These review panelists will be drawn from several different places: academic institutions, non-profit organizations, state and local government, and Federal agencies. People with disabilities and/or conditions requiring long term support, and/or caregivers may be included in the review panels.

Question: When will states that are awarded cooperative agreements begin receiving funds?

Answer: Projects have an anticipated start date of September 30, 2011. Shortly after the grant is awarded, grantees may begin drawing down funds through the Payment Management System. During the planning phase, grantees will be able to access no more than 15% of total grant funding to develop their implementation plans. At the conclusion of the planning phase, the grantee must participate in a planning phase exit conference and receive approval of AoA to progress to the implementation phase and access the remaining 85% of cooperative agreement funding.